Between Christ, Calvin, and the worthy Senator B6renger confusion is possible only from the terrace of a cafe.[8] But it may be expedient to dump them all into the same bag, and to put me with them, as M. Eugene Montfort, the author of *Montmartre et les boulevards,* has just amused himself by doing in the latest issue of *Les Marges.*[9]1 have apparently written (if you take his word for it) a "passionate defense** of Calvin.[10]1 detest that figure; but recently I spoke against M. de Gourmont; and that can be done only in the name of Calvin, it seems. Willy-nilly, I shall be a Calvinist

I was trying to show in that article how harmful Remy de Gourmont's negative skepticism "• is to the work of art. M. Montfort suggests to M. de Gourmont to reply *by showing how the Protestant spirit can be equally ruinous and injurious to the work of art." *Equally ruinous,* he says; but I claim that it can be much more so! And I do not believe that one can imagine a form of thought more contrary to the work of art (and to my work in particular) and even more hostile (most often without knowing it) than Calvinism. This is what made me break away from it as soon as I began to write. At M. Montfort's invitation, Remy de Gourmont may well write such an article; but it won't be directed *against me.*

"No more sin! Everything goes! But M. Gide wants to be a sinner, he desires laws to enjoy the pleasure of transgressing them, he calls for forbidden acts (how delightful it is to perform them! . . .). If sin did not exist, it would have to be invented. And there are people who suppress it! . . *r*

Despite M. Montfort, this conception of sin as a delicious ice,[12] of sacrilege and Satanism (which was Barbey d'AureviUy's, for instance, and often Remy de Gourmont's), is as far from Protestantism as it can be. Nor is it any more mine for that reason.

Indeed, it is impossible for me to conceive of ethics as independent

[8] In a campaign to purify the streets of Paris and outlaw pornographic publications, Senator B&renger, a self-appointed censor, had written in *L'Echo de Paris* that he refused to recognize a special privilege for talent. Andre" Gide answered him in a witty and annihilating article in *UErrmtage* of 15 April 1906.

[9] Issue of May 1910. [A.] *Les Marges* (1903-14) was edited by Eugene Montfort, and the first twelve numbers (1903-8) were entirely written by him.

[10] M. Montfort is doubtless alluding to what I recently wrote on Balzac's *Catherine de Mtdicfc,* inspired by an article by Charles Maurras. [A.]

[11] And not bis spirit of inquiry, as M* Montfort tries to make us believe. [A.]

[12] An allusion to the story of the beautiful Italian lady who enjoyed the Florentine ices so much that she exclaimed: TPeccato dhe non sia una pecsata (What a shame it's not a sin) T